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MEDIA CONTACTS
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253
Krista Thompson | 928.637.5603
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

Naabik'iyátí' Committee approves \$150,000 to fund the demolition of the former Tuba City District Court building

WINDOW ROCK – On Thursday, the Naabik'iyátí' Committee voted in support of Legislation No. 0144-13, approving approximately \$150,000 in supplemental funding from the Undesignated, Unreserved Fund Balance to demolish the former Tuba City District Court building.

On Jan. 17, Navajo Nation Office of Environmental Health/Code Enforcement director Herman Shorty, issued an official 'Order of Permanent Closure' for the former Tuba City District Court building, citing health and safety concerns.

"The [building] inspector confirmed there is a presence of mold, the building foundation is unstable, and the roof is badly dilapidated," said Delegate Begaye. "If we attempt to repair or replace this building, it would cost millions of dollars."

Council Delegate Duane Tsinigine (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K'ai'bi'to, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake) questioned whether funding is available through alternative sources.

"Would you be able to use your internal budget to do the demolition if the Naabik'iyátí' Committee did not approve this?" asked Delegate Tsinigine.

"There is another potential source of funds for the demolition, but we are requesting your support to approve funds from the UUFB, which would free up some of our resources to address other judicial facility needs throughout the Navajo Nation," said the director of the Navajo Nation Judicial Administration Edward Martin, in response to the question posed by Delegate Tsinigine.

Several delegates voiced opposition to suggestions that the building be renovated and used by other Navajo Nation departments.

"The Budget and Finance Committee did not approve this legislation with a vote of 0-3, because we believe this building can be repaired and provide much needed office space for other Navajo Nation programs," stressed Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagnetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tse Si'ani, Wide Ruins).

Delegate Begaye informed his colleagues that Shorty provided an official evaluation of the building and the findings of a report carried out by a certified building inspector.

"The building is considered officially deteriorated and is beyond any type of feasible repair," stated Delegate Begaye.

After considering several options and reviewing reports provided by the presenters, Naabik'iyátí' Committee members voted 7-3 in support of Legislation No. 0144-13.

The legislation now moves on to the Navajo Nation Council for final consideration.

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